

SUMMARY REPORT ON CIA INVESTIGATION OF MKNAOMIProject Discovery.

The initial identification of the relationship between the CIA and the Army Biological Laboratory at Fort Detrick as a possible questionable activity requiring further investigation occurred in late April of this year. It resulted from information provided by a CIA officer not directly associated with the project in response to the repetitive appeals of the DCI that all past activities which might now be considered questionable be brought to the attention of Agency management. As a result of the information provided by him and by two other officers aware of the project, it became clear that further investigation of the matter was in order. The three identified the project at Fort Detrick as having involved the development of BW and possibly CW agents and associated dissemination systems that were suitable for clandestine use against human targets. They moreover identified lethal agents as among those involved in the project.

Concern about these assertions was heightened because the ADDS&T had noted in a recent review of the 1963 IG Survey of the Technical Services Division (TSD) that approximately \$90,000 in that current fiscal year was spent at Fort Detrick "for the maintenance of a biological warfare capability." This statement appeared so important that a quick check was made to determine its significance. In response to questions about the activity, the cognizant officer in TSD -- now the Office of Technical Service (OTS) -- reported that a small effort had been carried on at Fort Detrick, but that it related to the development of incapacitants and BW/CW detection and did not carry the serious implications of the IG's report. It had in any event been terminated some years ago. The ADDS&T was satisfied with this response. When new and more disturbing information about the nature of the Fort Detrick activity emerged, however, the words of the IG Survey tended to give it credibility. Thus, late in April 1975 a search was begun for any records or other information available on the project. Difficulties were immediately encountered because the project cryptonym could not be identified. The search for records of fund transfers to Fort Detrick did ultimately produce information in that regard, however, and checks by the Office of Security on one of the individuals identified as having been involved in Fort Detrick activities did provide information on the basic agreement between the Army and the CIA relating to the project. The project cryptonym was then remembered by an OTS officer responsible for the activity in its later phases. This enabled OTS to recall the proper files from Records Center; two MKNAOMI files were retrieved. Some additional information was also produced from the Office of Logistics files. This collection of material largely confirmed the nature of the project as reported by the informants and identified a number of people involved in the activity. Additional cause for concern resulted from the association of several of these people with specific assassination plans as revealed in the IG's report on that activity.

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A major concern after the discovery of the records involved the disposition of a stockpile of BW agents and toxins maintained by Fort Detrick for possible Agency use. It was not known whether or not these materials had been destroyed along with the Army's BW stockpiles in response to Presidential Directives of November 1969 and February 1976. An unsigned memo raising the question of the disposition of Agency materials maintained by Fort Detrick posed the option of having it stored in a commercial laboratory. It was the impression of those in OTS who were familiar with the project that the material had in fact been destroyed but no records confirming it could be found. In an attempt to find such confirmation, laboratory storage facilities in OTS were searched and in the course of that search about 11 grams of shellfish toxin and 8 mg of cobra venom -- but none of the other materials -- were discovered.

Subsequent to the decision in late April that a full investigation of the Fort Detrick project was needed, all information uncovered was passed to the DCI, to staff members of the Rockefeller Commission and to the White House staff handling intelligence community investigation matters. In June, Senator Church was informed by Rod Hills of the White House that a sensitive activity was under investigation.

#### Sources of Information.

This summary report on the activity is based upon an investigation utilizing: (1) the files and documents uncovered as a result of the initial search which are limited and contain only a small number of Agency-originated documents; (2) the material found in OTS storage which includes the shellfish toxin and several pieces of delivery hardware; (3) interviews voluntarily given by current Agency employees who had some knowledge of the project and by a number of retired employees indicated by the records as having been more deeply involved at stages of particular interest; (4) information contained in the IG's Report on assassination planning and (5) information developed by a DoD investigation initiated as a result of conversations with the White House about the matter; this information has been incorporated in this report only where it illuminates specific aspects of the story uncovered from Agency sources, however.

#### Special Operations Division of Fort Detrick.

The Agency association with Fort Detrick involved the Special Operations Division (SOD) of that facility. This Division was apparently responsible for developing special applications for BW agents and toxins. Its principal customer appears to have been the US Army Special Forces. Its concern was with the development of both suitable agents and delivery mechanisms for special use in paramilitary situations. These applications clearly include one-on-one situations in which clandestine delivery was an objective. Both

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standard BW agents and biologically derived toxins were investigated by the Division. Discussions with former Fort Detrick employees indicate that SOD was first established as a distinct, highly secure activity within Fort Detrick in about 1948, though no records going back that far have been found. The Division was abolished in 1970 or 1971 as the Fort Detrick operation was terminated.

#### CIA Relationships with SOD.

The CIA relationship with SOD was formally established in May 1952 through a memorandum of agreement with the Army Chief Chemical Officer for the performance of certain research and development in the laboratory facilities of the Special Operations Division of the Army Biological Laboratory at Fort Detrick. The animus for establishing this relationship seems to have been a belief in OTS that the special capabilities of the Fort Detrick group and its access to biological materials of all sorts provided the Agency with expertise and capabilities which were appropriate to its function and not otherwise available. Discussions indicate that the perception of the requirement for such capabilities was tied to earlier OSS experience. This experience included the development of two different types of agent suicide pills to be used in extremis and a successful operation using BW materials against a Nazi leader. In the latter case, Staph. enterotoxin (food poisoning) was administered to Hjalmar Schacht so as to prevent his appearance at a major economic conference during the war. This agent was included in the materials maintained for the Agency by SOD. Initial funding was at the \$200,000 a year level which grew to a high point in FY 1958 of \$350,000 and then dwindled to \$75,000 a year in the late 1960's. Though there appear to be some gaps in available funding records, total Agency funding in the period from FY 1953 through FY 1970 is estimated to have been somewhat more than \$3 million. These funds were apparently used to generally augment the level of effort undertaken by SOD. Agency requirements for specific R&D were not levied in any programmatic way, but rather the Agency identified particular work being done by SOD as part of its program supporting the Army Special Forces as being of interest and then levied requirements for the customizing of such developments for Agency use. Through the course of years, Agency objectives in the project became better defined. Thus a project approval memo of 1967 identifies the four functional categories of project activity:

- a. Maintenance of a stockpile of incapacitating and lethal agents in readiness for operational use;
- b. Maintenance, assessment and evaluation of a designated balance of biological and chemical disseminating systems for operational readiness;

c. Adaptation and testing of a non-discernible microbioinoculator (a dart device suitable for the clandestine and imperceptible inoculation with BW/CW agents) to determine compatibility with various materials and to assure that the microbioinoculator cannot be identified structurally or easily detected upon a detailed autopsy; and

d. Provide technical support and consultation on request to meet ad hoc requirements related to offensive and defensive BW/CW.

In the later years the activities dwindled to the point of simply maintaining a stockpile of agents and delivery systems for possible Agency use.

#### Project Management within CIA.

Based on all the information available, it appears that from its outset the project was characterized by a compartmentation that was extreme even by CIA standards. Only two or three Agency officers at any given time were cleared for access to Fort Detrick activities. This work was managed first within the Biology Branch and later in the Chemistry Branch of TSD. Because of the sensitivity of the activity, queries by operations officers as to the availability of materials and delivery systems of the type being developed at Fort Detrick were automatically turned away by TSD unless initial approval for contact had been given by the Deputy Director for Plans. Even when this was the case, the Chief of TSD often referred the operations officer directly to one of the cleared officers dealing with Fort Detrick and was never informed as to the nature of the discussions. This method of procedure has been confirmed both through interviews and by the IG report on assassination planning. Almost no written records were kept. Though some CIA-originated documents have been found in the project files, it is clear that only a very limited documentation of activities took place. No records on such things as material control, receipt, delivery, destruction, etc., can be found. No documents relating to any possible operational use of the material have been found. The files as they exist are quite different from those normally maintained in the course of a typical CIA R&D project. As noted above, funding to the project was provided simply on the basis of augmenting the level of effort established by Army funding. There appears to have been no relation of funding to specific tasking, nor can any strict accounting of funds on the basis of effort expended in the Agency's behalf be found. Project officers with whom discussions were held stated that the funding was simply provided to maintain the availability to the Agency of the capabilities of SOD. Finally, there is little evidence of much specific program definition on the part of the Agency. Though occasional specific requests for material

or for investigations relating to the solution of a hypothetically posed operational problem can be found, the Agency through the years appears generally to have ridden on a program generated internally by SOD largely on the basis of Special Forces requirements. There are one or two exceptions which will be discussed below.

#### Activities of Peculiar CIA Interest.

Though discussions with people associated with the project reflect an overriding interest in incapacitants, particularly in later years, available records make it clear that CIA interests included maintaining a stockpile of lethal materials and delivery systems. The evidence indicates that the Agency relied upon the use of specific BW agents and toxins being investigated as a normal part of the Army's BW program. However, directions were given to investigate such matters as agent stability over varying periods of time, the suitability of specific agents for preparation in dry form, the development of dart coatings, and the preparation of materials in a form suitable for dusting of clothes, pillows, etc.

A major early requirement of the Agency was to find a replacement for the standard cyanide L-Pill issued to agents in hazardous situations and U-2 pilots for suicide purposes in the event of capture. Work on this problem was done at Fort Detrick and ultimately centered on the coating of a number of 80 drill bit (the smallest made) with shellfish toxin. In the course of this work some shellfish toxin was stored in the TSD laboratory for the purpose of conducting stability tests. Though the tests of lethality were actually made at Fort Detrick, the toxin was stored in TSD where records could be maintained with assurance that samples of the same toxin were regularly tested. In conjunction with this project, a considerable amount of work was done in developing concealment schemes for the drill or pin to be used in the event suicide was necessary. The culmination of this effort occurred with Powers' flight in May 1960 during which he carried such a device concealed in a silver dollar. In this case the grooves of the drill bit were filled with shellfish toxin. The discovery of the device by the Soviets ended the program, as a compromise of such devices seemed to have destroyed their future utility. The Powers flight was the only time such devices were provided for operational use.

Primary Agency interest seemed to relate to the development of dissemination equipment to be used with a standard set of agents kept on the shelf. A number of such dissemination devices appear to be peculiarly suited for the type of clandestine use one might associate with Agency operations. Some of these were included among hardware stored for the Agency at Edgewood Arsenal subsequent to the closure of SOD: attache cases rigged to disseminate an agent into the air, a cigarette lighter rigged to disseminate an agent when lighted, a fountain pen dart launcher, an engine head bolt designed to release an agent when heated, a fluorescent light starter to activate the light and then release an agent, etc. Available records do not indicate whether or not all

these were developed specifically for the CIA, though the DoD investigation has identified the head bolt device as falling into such a category. The association of this equipment with specific Agency requirements because of nature is apt to be misleading, however. At a meeting in June 1952, at the very outset of the Agency's association with SOD when CIA representatives stated they as yet had no specific requirements, a list of SOD priorities for work on dissemination devices was provided. This dissemination list included such things as cigarettes, chewing gum, cigarette lighters, wrist watches, fountain pens, rings, etc. Presumably work on these devices was already underway in response to Army Special Forces requirements. Nevertheless, the Agency clearly showed an interest in such devices and levied requirements for the special preparation of some.

One development peculiarly associated with the CIA was the "microbio-inoculator" which was an extremely small dart device which could be fired through clothing to penetrate the skin so as to inoculate the target with an agent without his perception of being hit. An added fillip to this development was the requirement that no indications of the use of such a device be discernible in the course of autopsy. A large amount of Agency attention was given to the problem of incapacitating guard dogs. Much of the equipment delivered to the Agency and some of the testing undertaken by it involved a dart delivery system carrying dog incapacitants, and an antidote used subsequently to restore the dog to normal activity. Though most of the dart launchers used in these developments were developed for the Army, the Agency did request the development of a small hand-held dart launcher for its peculiar needs.

A lot of work was done on human incapacitation. OTS apparently received continuing requests for safe, effective and rapidly acting, incapacitating devices. Many of these related to requirements for incapacitating Viet Cong leaders before they could render themselves incapable of talking and terrorist before they could take retaliatory action. Much work was done in trying to use the dart system for such purposes, but real success was never actually achieved. Since a larger amount of an incapacitating agent is required to safely inactivate a human than a lethal agent required to kill him, no scheme was developed for introducing sufficient amounts through the use of darts. Attempts were made to solve this problem by increasing the area of the darts available for coating and for making a dart which would dissolve in tissue which could thereby introduce more material into the system. Work on this project was underway when the association with SOD ended and Edgewood Arsenal endeavored to complete the project using unexpended Fort Detrick funds. Success was not achieved, however. One reason for the preoccupation of those involved in the project with the incapacitant problem may well have been the substantially greater difficulty of solving it when compared to developing lethal mechanisms.

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Substantial work was also done for the Agency in the development of spoilants for agricultural products, biological materials for the contamination of petroleum stores, and agents for use in the destruction of electronics, optical systems, structural materials, etc. At times in the history of the project, requirements for such materials as these were apparently very high on the Agency's list.

#### Shellfish Toxin.

By the late 1960's, a stockpile of some 15-to-20 different BW agents and toxins was maintained on a regular basis by SOD for possible Agency use. The supply included such agents as food poisons, infectious viruses, lethal botulinum toxin, paralytic shellfish toxin, snake (krait) venom, Microsporium gypsum which produces severe skin disease, etc. Varying amounts of these materials ranging from 100 grams to 100 milligrams were maintained.

As noted above, with the Presidential Order requiring the destruction of Army BW and toxin stockpiles, the question was raised as to the disposition of Agency materials. Though specific accounting for each agent on the list is not on hand, DoD indicates that, with the likely exception of the shellfish toxin all of these materials were in fact destroyed by SOD personnel.

The 11 grams of shellfish toxin -- along with 8 milligrams of cobra venom -- was found by the Chief of the OTS Chemistry Branch, in Vault B10 in the basement of [ ] which houses OTS. This vault is a lightly used laboratory area and historically associated with the Biology and Chemistry Branches of OTS. It has been regularly used for the storage of dangerous materials of various types. In past years, the combination to the vault had been available only to the Chief and Deputy Chief of the Chemistry Branch and their secretary. More recently, the combination had been given to other members of the Chemistry Branch as well since nuclear battery tests had been run in the laboratory. With the discovery of the material on 20 May 1975, however, the combination was changed and is now available only to the Chief of the Chemistry Branch, his secretary, and OTS security officers. On 13 June the vault was put under 24-hour guard.

The freezer in which the toxin was found is located under one of the workbenches in the laboratory. The Fort Detrick material was the only thing in the freezer and was in two one-gallon cans along with several smaller containers. There were no labels on the gallon cans, but on top of each was a folded piece of paper with pertinent information about the contents. This information provided the types and amounts of material and the date on which it was put into storage. The shellfish toxin was, according to this information, put into the freezer in February 1970, and the cobra venom, in February 1961. The shellfish toxin was packaged in several different forms including two individual doses in tablet form.

The discovery of the material was a result of repeated attempts with OTS to determine what disposition had been made of Agency BW materials held by Fort Detrick. In making one more check on this, a former Chief of the Chemistry Branch, who retired in September 1972, was called and asked if he knew what the disposition had been. The retired officer stated that he thought perhaps some of the shellfish toxin might not have been destroyed and in storage in OTS. In following up on this lead, the material was found in a freezer.

Though it is hard to understand how, inquiry shows that such material could in fact have been stored for so long a time without anyone's being aware of it. The laboratory is no longer used for the type of work for which it was originally built and had become a disordered storage facility. There have been no requirements for use of the freezer in the intervening years and it is indeed possible that no occasion arose to investigate the contents of the freezer. There have been no reported functioning difficulties with the freezer during this entire period.

After finding the shellfish toxin in the vault, a complete inventory was taken. A large number of dangerous chemicals or drugs of various types was found. These materials relate to a number of past programs of TSD, including the drug project, the development of harassment materials for crowd control or meeting disruption, crop contamination programs, etc. Small amounts of five other lethal preparations were found. Two of these are known to have been obtained by the Agency for testing at Fort Detrick. Nothing is known about the reasons for storing the others. In addition to these lethal materials a number of L-Pills were found. Also discovered was some of the hardware developed as part of the MKNAOMI project: 30/06 micromissile cartridges containing dog incapacitant, 10 hand-held launchers loaded with darts coated with dog incapacitant, 10 capsules containing an oral dose of dog incapacitant, and 4 pistols, two of which were commercial, syringe-firing devices used for wild animal capture and two were weapons modified to fire darts.

The current Chief of the Chemistry Branch had no recollection at the time of its discovery of the shellfish toxins having been obtained from Fort Detrick and stored in the laboratory. On 30 June, discussions were held with the officer (now retired) who was Branch Chief at the indicated time of the transfer of the material to OTS. He stated that the toxin had in fact been called back from Fort Detrick and stored in the laboratory on the basis of his own decision which resulted from conversations with the current Branch Chief who was then the MKNAOMI Project Officer. It was their belief that the cost and difficulty of isolating the shellfish toxin were so great that it simply made no sense to have it destroyed, particularly when there would be no future source of the toxin. Furthermore, they felt that storing it was not in violation of the new policy because of provisions allowing for the preservation of research amounts of such materials. The current Branch Chief believes this explanation is correct but still does not recall the actual act of receiving the material from Fort Detrick. Both agree that no one, including the Chief



of TSD, was told of this decision or the fact that the material had been delivered by Fort Detrick. As the earlier Branch Chief recalls, this took place prior to his being told by the Chief of TSD to personally inform Fort Detrick that destruction of the material on the inventory list should take place. Neither could recall precisely how the material was delivered to OTS, but the DoD investigation indicates that it was delivered by someone from Fort Detrick.

Both are certain that the shellfish toxin in storage in OTS is the same toxin as that listed on the inventory included in the disposal memorandum. This view is supported by the DoD investigation. There is, however, a discrepancy between the amount in storage as calculated from the labels and the amount shown on the inventory. Since the material in storage is in several different forms and complete reliance is placed upon labeling rather than measurement, however, no real discrepancy may actually exist.

Discussions with Richard Helms and Tom Karamessines, DCI and DDP respectively, at the time the disposal question arose, have established that both were aware of the disposition question and that clear instructions were given that the Agency stockpile should be destroyed by the Army and that, in accordance with Presidential Directives, the CIA should get completely out of the BW business. Helms' memory is sharpened on this matter by his presence at the meeting at which the Presidential decision was made.

The explanation derived from these interviews as to how the shellfish toxin came to be in Agency storage is fully consistent with other available information. The earlier Branch Chief stated that the material was always handled with extreme care. Undoubtedly, it was simply transferred from one freezer to another and in his view was continually under adequate control. He is certain that nothing was done with it subsequent to its delivery and prior to his departure from the Agency in 1972. The current Branch Chief has given assurance that it was untouched subsequent to that until its discovery in May of this year.

After the discovery of the material, OTS was told to investigate ways in which they could safely dispose of it with full documentation. Edgewood Arsenal was contacted and arrangements were made to deliver the material to Edgewood for disposal on 11 June 1975. The disposal was to be witnessed by a representative from the IG's office. On the day prior to the scheduled delivery, these arrangements were cancelled, however, because the DCS&T wished to consider further ways of insuring that the destruction of the material could not be later misinterpreted. Upon informing Edgewood Arsenal of this decision, OTS was told that while Edgewood would dispose of chemical material for the CIA, it would not do so in the case of biological materials since that was not consistent with the mission of the arsenal. No further efforts toward the disposal of the material have taken place, and it remains under guard in the OTS vault.

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Operational Uses of MKNAGMI Material.

There is no record associating the project with actual operations. Discussions with those involved in the project indicate that hand-launchers with darts loaded with dog incapacitant were delivered for use in S.E. Asia. In fact, one such operation has been uncovered. It involved the penetration of the North Vietnamese Embassy in a S.E. Asian capital so as to emplace audio devices. The compound was guarded by watch dogs which made entry difficult even when it was empty. Darts were delivered for the operation but were not used. The guard dogs -- in gross violation of proper guard dog behavior -- ate meat treated with dog incapacitant which was offered by the entry team. The discussions also indicate that some of the material or crop spoilsants may have been employed. While no direct connections to assassination planning have been found, there are some disturbing similarities between the agents being investigated at Fort Detrick and some of the reported schemes.

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT : Contingency Plan for Stockpile of  
Biological Warfare Agents

1. On 25 November 1969, President Nixon ordered the Department of Defense to recommend plans for the disposal of existing stocks of bacteriological weapons. (On 14 February 1970, he included all toxin weapons.)

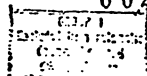
2. On 13 January 1970, the Special Operations Division of Fort Detrick, Maryland prepared a requested agent inventory, less toxins, and submitted it to the Scientific Director, Fort Detrick. This inventory was a required input to assist the Commanding Officer, Ft. Detrick to prepare a comprehensive plan for demilitarization on site of all biological agents/amunitions which are stockpiled in support of operational plans.

3. Under an established agreement with the Department of the Army, the CIA has a limited quantity of biological agents and toxins stored and maintained by the SO Division at Ft. Detrick. This stockpile did not appear on the inventory list. The agents and toxins are:

Agents:

1. Bacillus anthracis (anthrax) - 100 grams
2. Pasteurella tularensis (tularemia) - 20 grams
3. Venezuelan Equine Encephalomyelitis virus (encephalitis) - 20 grams
4. Coccidioides immitis (valley fever) - 20 grams
5. Brucella suis (brucellosis) - 2 to 3 grams
6. Brucella melitensis (brucellosis) - 2 to 3 grams
7. Mycobacterium tuberculosis (tuberculosis) - 3 grams

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8. *Salmonella typhimurium* (food poisoning) - 10 grams
9. *Salmonella typhimurium* (chlorine resistant) (food poisoning) - 3 grams
10. Variola Virus (smallpox) - 50 grams

**Toxins:**

1. Staphylococcal Enterotoxin (food poisoning) - 10 grams
2. *Clostridium botulinum* Type A (lethal food poisoning) - 5 grams
3. Paralytic Shellfish Poison - 5.193 grams
4. Bungarus Candidis Venom (Krait) (lethal snake venom) - 2 grams
5. *Microcystis aeruginosa* toxin (intestinal flu) - 25 mg
6. Toxiferine (paralytic effect) - 100 mg

This stockpile capability plus some research effort in delivery systems is funded at \$75,000 per annum.

4. In the event the decision is made by the Department of Defense to dispose of existing stocks of bacteriological weapons, it is possible that the CIA's stockpile, even though in R&D quantities and unlisted, will be destroyed.

5. If the Director wishes to continue this special capability, it is recommended that if the above DOD decision is made, the existing agency stockpile at SO Division, Ft. Detrick be transferred to the Huntingdon Research Center, Becton-Dickinson Company, Baltimore, Maryland. Arrangements have been made for this contingency and assurances have been given by the potential contractor to store and maintain the agency's stockpile at a cost no greater than \$75,000 per annum.

Thomas H. Karamessines  
Deputy Director for Plans

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REMARK: Contingency Plan for backfile of  
 Dislocated Persons Agents

TO: [redacted] (16 February 1970)

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